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WHAT BRITAIN HAS DONE FOR EGYPT.

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WHEN I left for Egypt last December I took with me the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW for that month, containing Mr. Penfield's remarkable article, entitled "England's Absorption of Egypt." I may mention at once that neither in Britain nor in Egypt have I ever heard the term "absorption" applied to the British "occupation" of Egypt; and I have never received, either at home or abroad, any corroboration of Mr. Penfield's assertion that my countrymen led strangers to believe that Egypt has "been severed from the Ottoman Empire and incorporated as an integral part of Queen Victoria's realm." He maintains that by unparalleled audacity Britain has taken possession of Egypt, the fact being that Britain intervened in 1882 to save Egypt from anarchy and that the occupation of Egypt by Britain was and is desired and sanctioned by four out of the six Great Powers of Europe.

The reason why the British occupation continues is that, if it ceased, the prosperity of Egypt, the result of Britain's magnificent work there since 1882, would come to an end. I shall proceed to point out in detail what Britain has done for Egypt, but I may preface my remarks by stating that none are more cognizant

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of, or grateful for, the benefits conferred by Britain upon their country than the Egyptian natives themselves. To them the year 1882 marks a new departure, a turning point in the history of their sorely tried country, a year when oppression came to an end, when justice was done, when liberty and peace were at last enjoyed, when savage modes of collecting taxes ceased, when a man's life and property were safe, when Egypt, after centuries of misrule, again knew what security and prosperity mean.

To show that I am not exaggerating when I maintain that these are the opinions of the natives of Egypt, I refer to a pamphlet written by one of their number which was published at Cairo in January, 1898. It is entitled "*Le Fellah ou la Reaction Dementie. Par un Jeune Egyptien, Ahmed Mokbel.*" The pamphlet is written in French, an ironical compliment to the three French newspapers in Cairo which daily abuse the British Administration. Ahmed Mokbel contrasts the tyranny under which the Egyptian fellah so long suffered with the justice, sympathy and liberty he has received since the British administration began. "If," he says, "there is anyone in Egypt who ought to express his gratitude to and satisfaction with the British, it is undoubtedly the fellah. Before the British came, the fellah was a being always shunned and disowned; if anyone stooped to address him, it was only with contempt or with the aid of the *Cour-bache*, the sole interpreter between him and his superiors.

Ahmed Mokbel then refers with scorn to the French newspapers in Cairo.

"No matter," he declares, "what incendiary and fanatical journals may assert in order to incite the fellah against the British occupation, this is what the fellah replies :

" 'You say and repeat that the British bear us ill-will ; that they cause us much evil ; that they will soon establish a Protectorate over us, etc.

" 'Well, what does that matter to us now, seeing that before the British came we were treated like beasts and that since their occupation we are actually regarded as human beings ?'

"If among my readers there are any who doubt the truth of what I say, let them travel through the fields of Egypt and put this question to the fellah : 'Do you like the British ? What do you think of them ?' They will hear the fellah exclaim :

" 'I like the British ; yes, I like them with all my heart, as much as I like my own children.'"

This outburst of gratitude is a remarkable tribute to the beneficence of British rule in Egypt. When the French governed

Egypt they certainly never received it. How much would they give to obtain a similar tribute from a single native of one of their African possessions!*

Let us, however, hear in more detail and in Ahmed Mokbel's own words the grounds of the fellaheen's gratefulness to their British administrators. He represents a fellah giving the following reasons for liking the British:

"(1.) The British abolished for me the accursed torture of the *Cour-bache*, enabling me to live longer for my children than my unfortunate father was able to live for me and my brothers.

"(2.) The British have protected me from tyrants.

"(3.) Thanks to them, I pay no taxes which I ought not to pay.

"(4.) I am no more harnessed to the plough, as I formerly was, to gratify the caprice or pleasure of the cruel Turks.

"(5.) Thanks to the British, I no longer behold lying on the ground, bathed in blood, the body of my beloved wife, the innocent companion of my misfortunes and sufferings—a homicide which was formerly committed with impunity and relish throughout Egypt. The only relief for me then was to let my heart weep, for I dared not weep publicly.

"(6.) Thanks to the British, I enjoy my frugal evening meal surrounded by my children, and I am clad in winter better than in summer.

"(7.) Thanks to the British, my young cotton plants do not perish for want of water as formerly, when water was only given abundantly to rich proprietors at a high price, while we poor devils of fellaheen, having nothing to offer, saw our plants dying of drought.

"In one word, I prefer the British to all others, and, that being the case, would it be reasonable for me to complain of them?"

Such is the testimony of a native of Egypt. What is there to set against it? That of the French Egyptian newspapers airing the opinions of the small French colony in Egypt; or that of some French tourist like M. Louis Malosse, whose "*Impressions d'Egypte*," published at Paris in 1896, show through what yellow and distorting spectacles French travellers view everything in Egypt since 1882. I cannot add that of Mr. Penfield, for, after sharply attacking British methods of government, he somewhat illogically adds: "For half a dozen years Egypt has fairly bristled with prosperity. The story of that country's emergence

* Baron de Malortie, an independent authority, shows that from the time of Mohammed Ali (the founder of the Khedivial dynasty) the French were disliked and mistrusted alike by Khedive, officials and natives. (*Egypt*, 1882, pp. 47 and 272.) Sir Alfred Milner remarks: "The disposition of France to bully Egypt does not date from 1882. . . . Cordial detestation of French diplomacy, bitter resentment of the manner in which France took every possible advantage of the dependent position of Egypt" was always evinced by every Egyptian native official (*England in Egypt*, 1893, p. 420).

from practical bankruptcy until its securities are quoted nearly as high as English consols reads like a romance; and there is no better example of economical progress, through administrative reform, than is presented by Egypt under British rule."

When we recollect that, according to the census of June 1, 1897, the population of Egypt proper was 9,654,233, while the European residents in Egypt were estimated in 1896 to number only 112,000,* it is evident that if the British administration gives satisfaction to the natives of Egypt Britain has fulfilled her mission there. I have cited a native's opinion. Let me also cite that of *Al Mokattam*, the great native newspaper of Cairo, appearing daily in Arabic. In an issue in January last it declared: "Everyone admits that the means of subsistence have been improved by the reforms introduced by the British occupation. *Life in Egypt is very much better now than formerly.*" I took every opportunity when in Egypt of gauging the correctness of these opinions and whatever strictures on British government I heard proceed from the French colony and its sympathizers. I never heard anything but enthusiastic laudation of British rule from the natives themselves. "Egypt for the Egyptians" was declared by Lord Dufferin to be the watchword of Britain in Egypt, and if the millions are satisfied the thousands must put up with the administration. But, from personal inquiry, I am convinced that the majority of the Europeans in Egypt, who are Greek and Italian traders (the French being a very small minority), are so pleased with the peace and security afforded by British rule, that they would not have any other substituted.

In stating the benefits conferred upon Egypt since the British occupation began in 1882, the difficulty is to know where to commence. Nearly everything has been changed in Egypt since 1882 and, in the opinion of the natives, everything has been changed for the better. Looking back upon pre-British times with horror and indignation, Ahmed Mokbel exclaims: "What a difference from the situation to-day! The fellaheen, formerly so despised, so degraded, so terrorized, have won a place in the sunshine of liberty and equality and speak with confidence."

Perhaps the first thing that now strikes the European on arriving in Egypt is the universal observance of law and order. The cause of that is the magnificent police force instituted and or-

* *Baedeker's Hand-Book*, 4th Edn., 1898.

ganized by the British administration. Formerly Port Saïd was described as a "hell upon earth." I walked with ladies through its streets after 11 one night and quietness and order were everywhere apparent. The reason was obvious. The town is now thoroughly policed, the police station occupying the center of the town and a policeman being stationed at every street junction. Of course the policemen are all Egyptians, and a more intelligent or sturdier force could not be found. Nor do police duties end there. Stands for carts and donkeys are at fixed sites throughout Cairo, each stand bearing the number of carts or donkeys to be accommodated; cabs and drivers have their numbers, tramways have their stations. The policeman is even called in, as at Philae, to enable tourists to see the temples unmolested by beggars; and when he disappears above the first cataract and the unhappy tourist is mobbed by an entire village demanding with one voice "Bakshish!" the traveller realizes what Lower Egypt must have been like before 1882, and thanks heaven for the British administration.

While the British insured law and order throughout Egypt by the formation of an effective police, they also relieved the fellah from two of the greatest scourges to which he had long been subject, viz., the *Corvée* and the *Courbache*, French terms which have no English equivalent, being foreign to Anglo-Saxon ideas. By means of the *Corvée*, the Khedive or Government in pre-British days could summon from their agricultural labors any number of fellaheen, and could employ them for any length of time on any manner of work the officials chose, the pay of the fellaheen being *nil* and their food sometimes bread and onions. It was doubtless an extremely cheap mode of labor for the governing classes, but a gross abuse of power. Probably the Pyramids and the Temples of the Pharaohs were built in this way, but in those old pagan days cruelty and oppression went hand in hand. It is extraordinary, however, to find Pharaonic practices existing so late in Egypt as during the making of the Suez Canal, when the forced labor of the natives involved the sacrifice of thousands of lives, under French auspices.* Since 1888 forced labor has only been used for the protection of the Nile banks during the period of flood. Previous to that year the *Corvée*

* "The forced labor of the peasantry in digging the canal was found to involve such intolerable hardships, that Ismail Pasha was obliged to put a stop to it."—*Milner's England in Egypt*, p. 419.

involved the employment of some 200,000 men every year for 100 days. This wretched system was finally abolished in 1888.*

If the *Corvée* was a burden, the *Courbache* was a terror to the peasantry of Egypt, a peasantry I may add than which none is more gentle, courteous and good-natured, making their oppression all the more shameful, if also all the more easy. I have to return to Ahmed Mokbel's pamphlet for details of the *Courbache*, which he designates "a vile instrument made of leather of the length of a metre, to which death is a thousand times preferable." He describes the revolting manner in which it was applied to a peasant in pre-British days:

"The fellah was compelled to pay a second time the tax which he had already paid, and if he had nothing wherewith to satisfy the greed of his village tyrant, woe, woe to him! He was hurled brutally to the ground, all the satellites of the despot flung themselves upon him and flogged him with the *Courbache*; and they never left off till the poor wretch, drenched with blood and with his limbs mutilated, had almost ceased to breathe."

This terrible picture shows what an abode of cruelty Egypt was ere administered by Britain.† Yet there are actually some ignorant or designing persons who invite the fellaheen, after passing through all these horrors, to intrust themselves and their families once more to Turkish rule and to demand the evacuation of Egypt by the British. What says Ahmed Mokbel to this? "Illusions! for if ten, a hundred, or even a thousand persons are favorable to the evacuation, six millions are opposed to it." In other words, while a small coterie in Cairo may favor the evacuation, the great mass of the people of Egypt is opposed to it. Now that the native Egyptians are enjoying the light and liberty of British government, they are not such fools as to desire to return to the darkness and slavery of former times.

Mr. Penfield devotes considerable space to showing the error the British administration committed in not making English the official language of Egypt. This seems to me to prove the gentleness and unselfishness of British rule. To please those Egyptians and others who are accustomed to speak French, British officials continue to use it, just as, to please the natives, they

* Lord Cromer's Report, 1897, p. 13.

† That the picture is not overdrawn we may believe when we find M. Malosse saying: "*Le temps est loin où un malheureux Egyptien des provinces, maltraité par son gouverneur qui lui avait enlevé sa femme et qui le faisait assommer à coups de courbache, mourait sous la bastonnade, s'écriant, 'Il n'y a de justice qu'au tribunal de Dieu!'*" Fortunately justice for the natives of Egypt arrived in 1882.

have never interfered in any way with the Mohammedan religion. One would have imagined that this would make the British popular, but Mr. Penfield strangely argues that "the administrative blunder of the English in not bringing in their language with their intelligent reforms is half responsible for the unpopularity of the occupation, whose benefits would surely be obliterated and forgotten six months after the departure of the last British functionary."

But is it true that the benefits conferred by Britain upon Egypt would be forgotten six months after the last British functionary left; or, as M. Malosse puts it, "after their last soldier departed from Alexandria?" Let us suppose that the Egyptian natives forgot, as, however, they are not likely to do, that it was to Britain they owed the abolition of the *Courbache* and the *Corvée* and the stoppage of the robbery of their water supply. Are there no lasting benefits conferred by Britain, no monuments which will remain for many generations and attest the energy, enterprise and beneficence of the rulers of Egypt from 1882 onward? The ancient Romans left imperishable memorials in the provinces they administered. May the modern Romans, the Britons, not do likewise in Egypt?

A railway is an institution of probably as lasting a character as any. What has the British administration done for the construction of railways in Egypt?

In Dr. Blackie's "*Comprehensive Atlas*," published in 1883, the railway from Cairo up the Nile valley is marked as extending no further than Assiût, so that we may take that town as the terminus of the Nile Railway when the British administration began. What has been done in railroad building since 1882? The railway, which then stopped at Assiût, 247 miles from Cairo, has now been extended past Luxor and Assuan to Shellâl (above the first cataract) 586 miles from Cairo. A military railway 23 miles in length ascends from Wadi Halfa above the second cataract, while another, some 50 miles in length, proceeds from Trinkitat to Tokar on the Red Sea littoral. Still more enterprising, a railway 300 miles in length has been constructed from Wadi Halfa across the desert to Bash Tenal, 73 miles south of Abu Hamed and 60 miles below Berber. Thus, when peace is restored, the traveller, who, before the British took Egypt in hand, could only go by railway from

Cairo to Assiût, will be able, with the exception of the comparatively short stretch from Shellâl to Wadi Halfa, to go by railway the whole way from Cairo to above the Fifth Cataract. The British have carried the railway and all its attendant benefits into the recesses of Nubia, into the heart of the Egyptian Sûdan, and yet we find Mr. Penfield echoing M. Malosse's assertion that they will be forgotten in Egypt when their last battalion departs! Will that magnificent railroad not of itself remain as a monument of British enterprise, resembling some of the works of the ancient Romans which still fill us with wonder and admiration?

Let us turn to another field of British industry. When my countrymen arrived in Egypt they found the Barrage* in ruins and useless. That celebrated work was begun under Mohammed Ali in 1835 and remained in operation till 1867.

It then gave way and the irrigation works dependent on it were rendered ineffectual. The whole cost of the Barrage amounting to £1,800,000, besides the unpaid labor of the peasantry forced to build it, had been wasted. As Sir Alfred Milner remarks, the Barrage "was practically useless till Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff came to Egypt" in 1884. As Director of Public Works, Sir Colin began the repair of the Barrage; he and his Anglo-Indian officials worked at its repair for five years, and after an expenditure of £460,000 completely restored it. Since 1890 it has operated successfully and been of untold value to Egyptian agriculture. Is this not also a monument erected by Britain in Egypt?

But the Barrage is only a small installment of a vast irrigation scheme devised and carried out by the British administration. "The country," says Milner, "was divided into five circles of irrigation—three in the Delta and two in Upper Egypt." As the fertility of Egypt is entirely dependent on irrigation, the masterly manner in which irrigation was extended throughout the land by the British officials is the keynote of Egypt's prosperity to-day. Take one province as an example. The Fayum, in ancient times, was renowned for its fertility. The famous Lake Moeris was there with its pyramid, statues, and labyrinth as seen and described by Herodotus. Lake Moeris has now shrunk to a comparatively small sheet of water known as Lake Qurûn, but the British administration has by a thorough and judicious

* This is a great dam across the Nile some miles below Cairo.

system of irrigation again made the Fayum the garden of Egypt. I quote from the official work of Major Brown, R. E., now Inspector-General of Irrigation for Lower Egypt, entitled "The Fayum and Lake Moeris," published in 1892 with a preface by Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff. The following table shows the great progress made by the Fayum under even three years of British rule, the quantities being in *kantars* (98 lbs.) and the values in Egyptian pounds (20s. 6d., stg.):

	1889.	1890.	1891.	Value 1891.
Cotton.....	39,433	56,334	86,638	£147,234
Cottonseed.....	82,010	104,608	185,917	102,254
Cereals	418,935	797,363	1,109,070	776,349
				<hr/> £1,025,887

The value of cotton, cottonseed and cereals exported from the Fayum in 1891 was at the rate of £4. 6s. 10d. per acre.

When British engineers undertook the irrigation of Egypt, they found that all-important department in a state which Sir Alfred Milner simply describes as "chaos." "Science and morality had alike been wanting" in the construction and working of irrigation in Egypt. While the officials impoverished the country by adopting wrong systems the rich robbed the poor of the water which is the life, the *sine qua non*, of Egyptian agriculture. The British have changed all that. Baedeker, an impartial German authority, declares that "the modern embankments and apparatus for the regulation of the water supply vie in importance with the greatest ancient works of the kind,"* so that my analogy between Romans and Britons is conceded. The poorest peasant is now as sure of his water supply as the richest Pacha. Speaking for the fellaheen, Ahmed Mokbel praises the British for "establishing one balance for all—for the rich proprietor in his golden palace as well as for the poor peasant in his thatched cottage."

One might imagine that, having done so much to increase the fertility of Egypt and the consequent prosperity and happiness of its inhabitants, the British might rest on their laurels. But they are too energetic a race for that.† They have made Lower Egypt a land of plenty; they are going to try and make Upper Egypt a land of plenty, too. They propose to build two

* *Handbook for Egypt*, 4th Ed., 1898.

† "L'énergie dans les actes et la rapidité dans les décisions sont les deux grands moyens pratiqués par les gouvernants anglais."—*Impressions d'Égypte par M. Malosse*, 1896.

colossal new Barrages, one at the First Cataract and one at Assiût. The first will be a great masonry structure a mile and a quarter long, and will hold in reserve for purposes of irrigation some thousand million cubic metres of water. The second will be similar in character, and is intended to raise the level of the Nile during summer, thus increasing the distributing power of the canals in Middle Egypt.*

Cynical French critics are evidently of opinion that the financial exploitation of Egypt and good salaries for British officials are the main, if not only, attractions which Egypt offers to Britain. Even the amiable M. Georges Noblemaire in his "*En Congé*" published at Paris in 1897, has his fling at "that veritable golden egg of British officialdom, the Egyptian Budget." Can these flippant gentlemen imagine no tie binding Britain to Egypt other than that of "filthy lucre?" Are they not aware that all the way up the Nile, ay, as far as Khartum, are the graves of those who gallantly fought and bled and died in Britain's and in Egypt's cause, and will they, Frenchmen and *galants hommes*, deny that these graves form an indissoluble link between Britain and Egypt? Standing on the summit of the Awas-el-Guarâni, the hill of the holy man, near Korosko, I saw beneath me the rude caravan track across the desert leading to Abu Hamed, which General Gordon followed on his last ride to Khartum. On a slope above the Wâdi, which the hero passed, I saw the little graveyard where sleep the British soldiers who fell around Korosko. A voyage up the Nile is not all a pleasure tour to the patriotic Briton, for he is often reminded of those, his countrymen, who laid down their lives in order that he might enjoy this pleasant cruise in safety and that his race might govern the valley of the Nile.

Sentiments like these are not confined to British travellers. In the steamers in which we ascended the Nile to its Second Cataract the company consisted one-third of British tourists, one-third of other Europeans, and one-third of tourists from the United States of America. It was a time of war, when British battalions were hurrying to the front to capture Omdurman, to crush the Dervishes and to avenge Gordon. And I noticed that none cheered the British soldiers more heartily than our kin from across the Atlantic. Observing some American girls waving their

* *Daily News*, Feb. 22, 1898. *Times*, March 22, 1898.

handkerchiefs and cheering as the Cameron Highlanders sailed past us up the Nile, I ventured to ask them what interest they took in these soldiers, seeing that they were British soldiers. "We, too, have British blood!" was the American girls' instant reply and ample justification.

Americans occupy an important position in extending the prosperity and civilization of modern Egypt.

Not only do they form at least one-third of the tourists visiting Egypt, and number some of the leading Egyptologists, but the beneficent effect of their missions and schools is everywhere apparent throughout Egypt. The magnitude of their Christian operations may be gathered from the fact that the Egyptian mission of the American Presbyterians has 100 stations, 20 churches and 97 schools.* Ask a little Egyptian child where it has learnt its English, and it will very probably answer: "At the American mission." The mission doctors, too, are of much service. An English lady might have died on board our mail steamer had a telegram not been sent to an American mission physician who came on board, attended to her, and removed her to the hospital at Assiût. Egypt has and will always have extraordinary attractions for the Anglo-Saxon race, for it is a race conversant with and believing in its Bible, in which Egypt holds so prominent a place. And let me add that, after a visit to Egypt, the ancient Jewish history, with which we have been familiar from childhood, acquires an interest and reality it never previously possessed.

In order to understand that history, however, we must not tarry at Cairo, but voyage up the Nile. It is generally admitted that no Pharaoh, no Khedive, no administration ever did so much for the opening up and the prosperity of Egypt from Cairo to the Second Cataract as the single British firm of Thomas Cook & Son. They are the real modern "lords of the Nile," all the wharves on which belong to them, all the mail steamers on which fly their flag, while almost all the tourist steamers and *Dahabiyehs* bear their name. They have done extraordinary service to the Egyptian native. They have caused a golden shower of prosperity to descend upon his head which he never knew before; they have relieved the dull round of his existence by a ceaseless flow of European travellers; they have

* *Baedeker's Egypt*, 4th Ed., 1898, p. 202.

enabled him to pass up and down his own highway, the Nile, with an ease and celerity he never before imagined. Finally, they have by their splendid flotilla, ever in readiness, put it in the power of the Egyptian administration instantly to send troops to repel invasion and so prevent the barbarous tribes of the Sudan from destroying in their ruthless march the hard won fruits of the natives' industry, besides massacring the natives themselves.

The reorganization of the Egyptian army is the one great success of the British administration admitted by M. Louis Malosse, so I need not dwell much upon it. Suffice it that I record that out of the faint-hearted Egyptians of Tel-el-Kebir, British discipline and example have produced the lions of Toski and Atbara. The permanent headquarters of the Army are at Cairo, with a staff at Dongola, and another at Suakim. The Egyptian cavalry and artillery have likewise their permanent headquarters at Cairo. The Egyptian infantry consists of 18 battalions, whereof six are Sudanese battalions, magnificent coal-black fellows often over six feet in height. These sons of the Sudan, long the terror of the Egyptians of the Delta, have been converted into their best defenders, just as the Scottish Highlanders after the Rebellion of 1745 furnished Britain with some of her finest regiments. There is also a railway battalion, a camel corps, and a medical staff, besides a military school and a telegraph department, thus equipping Egypt with a complete, well-disciplined and reliable army capable of routing the most determined Dervishes.

With regard to many other reforms introduced by the British administration, and as illustrating still further what Britain has done for Egypt, I feel I cannot do better than give the official memorandum, dated Feb. 18, 1898, published under the high authority of Sir Elwin Palmer, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Ministry. He says:

"The population of Egypt has increased in fifteen years by 2,920,486, *i. e.*, 43 per cent.

"Notwithstanding the increase of about 13 per cent., *i. e.*, 614,195 feddans, in the cultivated area paying taxes, the land tax is now less by £(E)85,691 than in 1881. The average tax per feddan in 1881 was £(st.) 1. 2s; it is now 18s. 3d. The annual tax on land has, since 1891, been reduced by £(E)507,600, other direct taxes have been reduced by £(E)223,000, and indirect taxes amounting to £(E)186,000 per annum have been abolished. The

tobacco tax having been raised and the smuggling stopped it now produces over a million, whereas in 1881 the revenue derived from tobacco only amounted to £(E)97,168.

"Scarcely any arrears of land tax now exist, whereas in past years the amounts were very large. The expropriations and sales of crops for arrears have been reduced more than 50 per cent, and are now quite insignificant.

"Since 1890 the policy has been to diminish the direct taxes, covering the loss of revenue by an increase in the indirect taxes, and thus causing a more even distribution of taxes and an increase in the number of taxpayers. The only indirect tax, however, that has been raised is the tobacco tax, while others have been reduced or even abolished entirely.

"The taxation per head of population in 1881 was £ (st.) 1. 2s. 2d.; in 1897 it was 17s. 9d., a reduction of 20 per cent.

"Two hundred and twelve miles of new railway have been opened. There has been an enormous development of the railway and telegraph traffic, second-class passengers having increased from 415,000 to 1,153,000, third-class passengers from 3,100,000 to 9,412,000, and merchandise from 1,275,000 to 2,796,000 tons, while the number of telegrams has increased from 688,000 to 2,498,000, half the number being on account of railway service.

"A similar development in the post office has taken place, letters, newspapers, money orders, etc., having very largely increased in number.

"The expenditure on public instruction has been increased by over 37 per cent.; the number of schools has risen from 29 to 51, and the number of pupils from 5,366 to 11,304.

"The increase in the judicial receipts shows that the people have learnt to take advantage of the courts, especially as regards registration of deeds,

"Large sums of money have been expended of late years on irrigation. *i. e.*, on reproductive works. 1,700 kilometers of agricultural roads, 2,512 kilometers of drains, 3,054 kilometers of canals, and 575 kilometers of basin bank have been constructed in the provinces.

"The number of men called out on *corvée* has been reduced from 281,000 to 11,000 men.

"Imports have increased by over £ (E) 2,600,000, while, notwithstanding the enormous fall in the price of cotton and sugar, there has been only a slight falling off in the value of the exports.

"The quantity of salt sold has doubled, while the price has been reduced by close on 40 per cent.

"The tonnage of the Port of Alexandria has increased from 1,250,000 to 2,270,000.

"The amount of bonds outstanding on the market in 1881 was £(st)98,376,660; in 1897 it was £(st.)98,035,780, notwithstanding £(st.)13,219,000 of fresh debt raised to cover extraordinary expenditure, and £(st.)3,400,000 increase of capital due to conversion. The interest charge in 1881 was £(E)4,235,921; in 1897 it was £(E)3,908,684.

"The market price of 5 per cent. Privileged Debt in 1881 was £(st.)96¼; in 1897 the market price of the same debt converted into 3½ per cent. was £(st.)102.

"The 4 per cent. Unified Debt was at £(st.)71¾ in 1881, and at £(st.)106½ in 1897.

"The amount of debt per head of population was in 1881 £(st.)14. 8s. 9d.; it is to-day £(st.)10.0s. 2d.

I have said nothing as yet of the remarkable man who, since

1887, has held the chief place among the many eminent British officials to whom the present prosperity of Egypt is due. As British Minister-Plenipotentiary and Consul-General, Sir Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer, has, gifted with what Sir Alfred Milner calls his "most striking feature—a singular combination of strength and forbearance," piloted Egypt with safety and success not merely through the obstacles of Oriental conservatism and sloth, but past all the shoals and quicksands which threaten to engulf any country which every Great Power in Europe seeks to control. "It would be difficult," says Milner, "to overestimate what the work of England in Egypt owes to the sagacity, fortitude, and patience of the British Minister. . . . The contrast between Egypt to-day and Egypt as he found it, the enhanced reputation of England in matters Egyptian, are the measure of the signal services he has rendered alike to his own country and to the country where he has laid the foundations of a lasting fame." This noble tribute was pronounced by one who was long Under Secretary for Finance in Egypt and now is Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa.

Owing to the well-known caution and timidity of capital, a fair test of the prosperity of a country is to mark how its government securities stand on the Stock Exchange. I sometimes think that the critics who deprecate the British administration of Egypt must either not be holders of Egyptian government securities or have sold out too soon, for no sensible investor would deny that that administration had conferred extraordinary benefits on Egypt when he found that his "Egyptian State Domain stock," which in 1878 he bought at 73, was to-day worth 106; his "Egyptian Unified Debt," which in 1881 he bought at 71 3-4, was to-day worth 109; his "Egyptian Government Guaranteed Loan," which in 1885 he bought at 95 1-2, was to-day worth 109; while his "Egyptian Government Preference" and "Daira" stocks, which in 1890 he bought at 91 and 99 1-4, respectively, were to-day worth 105 and 106. Nothing but the steady progress of Egypt under exceptionally able management could have led to such a rise in the value of Egyptian government securities.

While giving in this article due prominence to the administrative and reforming action of Britain in Egypt, I by no means overlook the services of the native and other officials who have so loyally and efficiently supported the British. Yet it is Britain

and British officials who are now responsible for Egypt before the bar of History. From Lord Cromer's luminous Report, dated Jan. 15, 1897, on the "Finances, Administration and Condition of Egypt, and the Progress of Reforms," I gather that while he accepts full responsibility for the safety, progress and well being of Egypt, its financial and general administration are mainly controlled, and its reform has been chiefly effected, by British officials acting with and under his Lordship. He treats of Egypt as a country committed to his care, and under the management of British officials, of whom he is chief. There is no sign and apparently no chance of the country's retrogression under his vigorous control; there is nothing but progress and prosperity to record.

For, if Egypt can boast of a great historic Past, she can also confidently look forward to a great economic Future, provided she secure a wise, honest, and energetic administration. Granted that one condition, and Egypt will eventually become one of the most prosperous countries in the world, her wealth, commerce and industry will increase, and her inhabitants will know happiness which their forefathers often sighed for but never possessed. But the administration must be wise, it must be honest, it must be energetic, it must be popular with the natives themselves. I have endeavored to prove that the present British administration can lay claim to all these attributes, and I have, however imperfectly, ventured to show what Britain has done for Egypt. Mr. Penfield's criticism, as coming from an American, nay, the "late United States Diplomatic Agent in Egypt," was all the more strange, as the American missions and other institutions in Egypt have profited so much by the law and order introduced into Egypt since 1882. I confidently appeal to the many Americans resident or travelling in Egypt, and would ask them whether, considering the peace and security they have enjoyed there since the British administration began, they see (like Mr. Penfield) "scant justification" for Britain's "continuing her sojourn in Egypt?"

RALPH RICHARDSON.